

did you feel it?

# Delusional Cause

Monique Hendriksen

Artist contribution – September 14, 2015

***Delusional Cause* is an ongoing artistic project within the theoretical framework of Alfred Sohn-Rethel's critique of epistemology. This video is an interruption in a cumulative and reiterative study which aims to work toward a method or model to adequately visualize capital. *Delusional Cause* is part of 'did you feel it? [\[www.onlineopen.org/did-you-feel-it/\]](http://www.onlineopen.org/did-you-feel-it/)' **Open! Co-Op Academy**.**

Today, with GPS and Google Maps, we are more than ever used to images with a God's eye-view: a vertical scaling up and scaling down that depicts knowledge as an overview. But what do these maps tell us about the intelligibility of political economy and social conflict? The map gives a misleading overview that projects delusions of stability, safety and extreme mastery. It is capital that creates the effect of wholeness, while mapping disorients under the banner of orientation. It feeds our encompassing will-to-know, when in fact it doesn't supply any knowledge.

Activities of modeling, diagramming, and envisioning, such as those used in economics, are representational in a counter-intuitive sense because they break with a model of representation as mirror, photograph, or correlation between signifier and signified, index and referent. As representations of practically abstract processes and relations, they are also representations of invisibilities.

The mapping or figuring of capital is not a question of accuracy or resemblance, in which aesthetic form would be a mere instrument of knowledge, but constitutes a kind of force-field in which our conceptions of both modes of production and aesthetic regimes are put to the test.

Representation no longer needs to refer, in the sense of being physically mappable onto the outside world. The graph is not a picture of the social body as a whole, but a statistical correlation that shows patterns as a sign of nature's plan. If we take Sohn-Rethel's theory seriously, a bold diagram is actually more adequate than a precise map.

We don't need a deep mining of the world's detail for bits of evidence; there is no knowledge there. Fiction is a condition of truth and the blindness of the interior is a precondition of perspective. We have to think through the abstraction and not of revolutionary prospects. Overview is a fantasy, especially when it comes to capital.

*Delusional Cause* is an attempt to create a stylistic structure whose internal tensions are a metaphor for the internal tensions and structural tendencies of a social 'body' moving by a revolutionary path toward its own 'form'.

## References

- Sohn-Rethel, Alfred. *Intellectual and Manual Labour: A Critique of Epistemology*, London: Macmillan, 1977.
- Spark, Alasdair. 'Conjuring Order: The New World Order and Conspiracy Theories of Globalization', in *The Age of Anxiety: Conspiracy Theory and the Human Sciences*, ed. J. Parish and M. Parker, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001.
- Steyerl, Hito. *The Wretched of the Screen*, e-flux journal, 2012.
- Toscano, Alberto and Kinkle, Jeff. *Cartographies of the Absolute*, Zero Books, 2015.

**Monique Hendriksen** (1982, NL) graduated from the Dutch Art Institute (DAI) in 2015. She has a background in economics. Her artistic practice is informed by the desire to radicalize the space of art through her outspoken appropriation of visual systems in mix with abstract configurations. Her practice bridges multiple mediums including lecture performance, video essay, sound and PowerPoint animation. Art is at stake for her as a possibility to discuss the entangled relations between art, theory, politics and economics in relation to living conditions. She critically considers the complex nature of our digital condition as well as the neoliberal condition through her personal engagement with it.

Delusional Cause: Single channel video, full HD, 16:9, 10'48", 2015

## Crosslinks

'did you feel it?': [www.onlineopen.org/did-you-feel-it](http://www.onlineopen.org/did-you-feel-it)

## Tags

Aesthetics, Affect, Capitalism

This text was downloaded on April 29, 2024 from  
*Open! Platform for Art, Culture & the Public Domain*  
[www.onlineopen.org/delusional-cause](http://www.onlineopen.org/delusional-cause)